

Ornament for Clear Realization - Perfection of Wisdom Studies

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Table of Contents

CATEGORIZING SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS	2
THREE TURNINGS OF THE WHEEL OF DOCTRINE & THREE VEHICLES (YANAS)	2
84,000 Delusions – 84,000 Teachings	2
DISTINGUISHING THE FIRST WHEEL & THE FUNDAMENTAL VEHICLE — TENETS & PRACTICE	2
DISTINGUISHING THE SECOND WHEEL & THE UNIVERSAL VEHICLE — TENETS & PRACTICE	3
DISTINGUISHING THE THIRD & THE UNIVERSAL VEHICLE — TENETS & PRACTICE [chart]	3
THE SECOND WHEEL, THE <i>PERFECTION OF WISDOM SUTRAS</i>	4
MANJUSHRI & MAITREYA – BUDDHA'S TRANSMISSION OF THE WISDOM & METHOD LINEAGES	5
Why we need to Study <i>Universal Vehicle</i> METHOD Path before focusing on the WISDOM {Emptiness} Path Study	6
Chart - FUNDAMENTAL & UNIVERSAL VEHICLES' PRACTICES of METHOD & WISDOM PATHS	6
What is the Method in the <i>Fundamental Vehicle</i> ?	6
RENUNCIATION	7
What is the Wisdom of the <i>Fundamental Vehicle</i> ?	7
What is the Method in the <i>Universal Vehicle</i> ?	7
What is the Wisdom employed in the <i>Universal Vehicle</i> ?	8
“Masculine” Method / “Feminine” Wisdom	8
Practices of the Three Persons (<i>Lam Rim</i>)	9
Practices of Persons of Beginning [Small/Low] Capacity	9
Practices of Persons of Intermediate [Middling] Capacity	10
Practices of Persons of Advanced [Higher] Capacity	10
TRANSMISSION of the WISDOM [PROFOUND] LINEAGE of the <i>PERFECTION of WISDOM SUTRAS</i> to TIBET	10
After Buddha's Parinirvana	10
Nagarjuna	11
Nagarjuna's Life-Span & Transmission of Wisdom Lineage to Chandrakirti	11
Transmission of Wisdom Lineage from Chandrakirti on in India to Atisha	12
TRANSMISSION of the METHOD LINEAGE of the <i>PERFECTION of WISDOM SUTRAS</i> to TIBET	12
Indian Holders of the Method Lineage	12
EARLY TRANSMISSIONS OF BUDDHISM TO TIBET	13
Tibetan Origination Story	14
First Tibetan King	14
First Introduction of Buddhism in Tibet	14
TIBET'S FIRST DHARMA KING - SONGTSEN GAMPO (CA. 618-650)	15
TIBET'S SECOND DHARMA KING - TRISONG DETSEN (CA. 740-798)	16
King Trison Detsen composed the first Tibetan Buddhist commentary	16
TIBET'S THIRD DHARMA KING - TRI RALPA CHEN.	17
TRANSLATING THE INDIAN TEXTS INTO TIBETAN	17
DARK ERA FOR BUDDHISM IN TIBET - KING LANG DARMA	18
Tibetan Tradition - Sticking Tongue out in Greeting	18
King Lang Darma's Assassination by Palkyi Dorje & the Black Hat Dance	18
Chinese Vinaya Tradition Saved the Tibetan Bhikshu/Gelong Lineage	18
FURTHER SPREAD AND DEGENERATION OF BUDDHISM IN TIBET	19
TRANSMISSION OF BOTH EXPLANATORY LINEAGES OF THE <i>PERFECTION OF WISDOM SUTRAS</i> IN TIBET, FROM JOWO ATISHA TO JE TSONG KHAPA	20
KING Lha Lama Yeshe Oe [10 th CENTURY A.D.] & ATISHA	20
Great Translators Missions to India	20
King Lama Yeshe Oe's Sacrifice & Atisha's Decision	20
ATISHA'S TRANSMISSION OF THE TWO EXPLANATORY LINEAGES OF THE <i>PERFECTION OF WISDOM</i> , METHOD & WISDOM, TO DROMTOMPA	21
CONCLUDING REMARKS	21
Appreciating the Sacrifices & Remembering the Kindness	21

Class Homework.....	22
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS.....	22
VEN. WY: When you say a ‘ <i>mind of renunciation</i> ’ – is that a ‘main main’?	22
VEN. DORJI: Arya Vimuktasena and Vimuktasenagaumin -- are they the same?	23
TODD: Would you say that Atisha actually invented the Lam Rim tradition?.....	23
MICHAEL: We ended, when going through the Method Lineage, with Vidyakokila	23
AMY: When Atisha brought the three lineages together –	24

[9:06] Last time we talked about the Buddha giving different teachings - actually said to be 84,000 different volumes of teachings. And these are said to be the antidotes to the 84,000 different delusions of sentient beings.

CATEGORIZING SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA’S TEACHINGS THREE TURNINGS OF THE WHEEL OF DOCTRINE & THREE VEHICLES (YANAS)

84,000 Delusions – 84,000 Teachings

Why do they say “84,000” different delusions? One reason given is that over 24-hours [9:15], there’s a way in which in every second, so many delusions – anger, attachment, ignorance and so forth – arise in very rapid succession. If we check our minds, delusions are coming up all the time. Sometimes ignorance; sometimes attachment, sometimes anger. Very, very rapidly. One after the other. Within 24-hours, 84,000 different instances of delusions may arise. So this shows how complex our minds are, and how easily negative states can arise in rapid succession. Therefore the Buddha gave so many different teachings, 84,000 volumes of teachings, to counteract those. Basically, a huge amount.

All of those 84,000 volumes of teachings can be categorized into *Three Wheels*. The Buddha turned the Wheel of Dharma. Categorizing the Buddha’s teachings into *Wheels* is the traditional Indian terminological division.

Tibetans do follow this division of the *Three Wheels*. However, more commonly, Tibetans categorize the divisions of Buddha’s teachings into the *Three Yanas*, i.e., the *Three Vehicles*: the *Fundamental Vehicle (Hinayana)*, *Universal Vehicle (Mahayana)* and the *Tantra Vehicle (Vajrayana)*.

Now with Buddhism spreading to the West, perhaps a different way of categorizing Buddha’s teachings will emerge.

DISTINGUISHING THE FIRST WHEEL & THE FUNDAMENTAL VEHICLE — TENETS & PRACTICE

Of the Three Wheels, do you remember the First Wheel? What was the main subject matter of the First Wheel? [Student’s reply inaudible]

The Four Noble Truths, yes; and in terms of the *Three Vehicles*? The *Fundamental Vehicle*, right.

So the *Fundamental Vehicle* can be divided into two:

- the *Fundamental Vehicle Tenets*, and
- the *Fundamental Vehicle Practice*.

So the First Wheel teaches the *Fundamental Vehicle* Tenets, the *Fundamental Vehicle* view, which is the view of the **GREAT EXPOSITION (Vaibashika)** and the **Sutra (Sautantrika) Schools**: Those schools teach the *Fundamental Vehicle Tenets*. In terms of **Practice**, the First Wheel teaches the *Fundamental Vehicle Path*, i.e., the *Fundamental Vehicle* goal, which is **Self-Liberation**.

DISTINGUISHING THE SECOND WHEEL & THE UNIVERSAL VEHICLE — TENETS & PRACTICE

Of the *Three Vehicles*, which *Vehicle* does the Second Wheel teach? [Student's reply inaudible] The *Universal Vehicle*, right. The *Universal Vehicle* can also be divided into the tenet and practice. This is more complex.

In terms of the *Universal Vehicle* Tenets, what does the Second Wheel teach? Which tenet? [Student's reply inaudible] The **MIDDLE WAY (Madhyamika)**. So the **MIDDLE WAY** tenets – are all of you familiar with the Four Tenet systems of Buddhism?

Of the **Four Tenet systems of Buddhism**:

- **GREAT EXPOSITION & SUTRA tenet schools** are *Fundamental Vehicle* tenets;
- the **MIND ONLY & MIDDLE WAY tenet schools** are *Universal Vehicle* tenets.

The **MIDDLE WAY** school can be divided into the **AUTONOMY** school [Skt. *Svatantrika Madhyamika*¹] and the **CONSEQUENTIALIST** [Skt. *Prasangika Madhyamika*²] tenet holders. We will go into these in more detail later.

The **Second Wheel** in terms of **Tenets** taught *Universal Vehicle* tenets, and from amongst the two *Universal Vehicle* tenet systems, the Second Wheel taught the **MIDDLE WAY**.

Which **Practice** did the Second Wheel teach? The *Universal Vehicle* practice, yes. The **Bodhisattva** practice, the Six Perfections, all the different minds that are needed in order to attain Enlightenment that bring us closer to Enlightenment. These minds include Bodhicitta, the Six Perfections and so forth.

DISTINGUISHING THE THIRD & THE UNIVERSAL VEHICLE — TENETS & PRACTICE [chart]

The *Third Wheel*, of the *Three Wheels*, what did the *Third Wheel* teach? [Student's reply inaudible] Not tantra, no. [Student's reply inaudible] Well, still Mahayana; right. The *First Wheel* teaches the *Fundamental Vehicle*. The *Second* and *Third Wheels* teach the *Universal Vehicle*: *Universal Vehicle Tenets and Practice*.

¹ Autonomy Middle Way, *Svatantrika Madhyamika* , Tib. rang rgyud pa, རང་རྒྱུද་པ་ < Abbrv of dbu ma rang rgyud pa , དු་ම་රང་རྒྱུද་པ>

² Consequentialist , Tib. thal 'gyur pa , ཐ་ལ་འଗ୍ୟର୍ପା

Wheel of Dharma	taught <i>Tenets (WISDOM)</i> of the:	& <i>Practice (METHOD)</i> of the:
First Wheel	<i>Fundamental Vehicle - GREAT EXPOSITION & SUTRA</i>	<i>Fundamental Vehicle</i>
Second Wheel	<i>Universal Vehicle - MIDDLE WAY</i>	<i>Universal Vehicle</i>
Third Wheel	<i>Universal Vehicle - MIND ONLY</i>	<i>Universal Vehicle</i>

So the *MIDDLE WAY* we touched on. Which *Universal Vehicle* tenet did the *Third Wheel* teach? [Student's reply inaudible] The *MIND ONLY* tenets, that's right. And in terms of *Practice*? [Student's reply inaudible] Not tantra; not tantra. We are not talking of tantra at all, no tantra. So practice, the *Third Wheel* teaches the same practice as in the *Second Wheel*. There's no different in terms of practice.

In other words, in the *First Wheel*, the *Fundamental Vehicle* Practice and *Tenets*. During the *Second & Third Wheels*, the *Universal Vehicle* Practice is the same, but during the *Second Wheel* the *MIDDLE WAY* tenets are taught and during the *Third Wheel*, the *MIND ONLY* tenets.

Sounds complicated, but when we review it a couple of times, it is quite clear. If you still have questions, do not hesitate to ask. If anything is unclear, please ask.

THE SECOND WHEEL, THE *PERFECTION OF WISDOM SUTRAS*

So of the Three Wheels, the *Second Wheel* is the one that we are looking at in this course. The Buddha taught a certain genre of sutras at that time. Do you remember what these sutras were called? What is the subject matter of this course? [Student's reply inaudible]. Wisdom sutras, the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*.

So “*sutras*” – *sutras* means the words of the Buddha. *Sutra* is another term for ‘word of the Buddha.’ Actually the Sanskrit word *sutra* means ‘thread’. All of the Buddha's teachings are called *sutras* but there are different sets of sutras.

During the *Second Wheel*, when he taught the *MIDDLE WAY* tenets and the *Universal Vehicle* practice, he gave the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. When he gave the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, he gave them to different disciples. His disciples, different beings who were ready to listen to those teachings. However, those teachings also include two categories, if you like. The *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* contain two categories: the *Wisdom* category and the *Method* category. I said it before, the *MIDDLE WAY* Tenet, which is the *Wisdom*, and the *Universal Vehicle* Practice, which is the *Method*.

So the *Second Wheel*, which means the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, the Buddha explicitly or directly taught Emptiness, the *Wisdom*. He explicitly taught Emptiness. He explicitly taught the *MIDDLE WAY* Tenet, the *MIDDLE WAY* view, in other words, Emptiness. Implicitly or indirectly, in a hidden way, Buddha taught the practice and the path: the Six Perfections, Bodhicitta, compassion. Usually when we say, “*Wisdom and Method*,” sometimes we say, “*Wisdom and Compassion*,” because that is the main mind of the *Method*, Compassion. So we need those two as in the example of a bird.

A bird can only fly if it has two wings, uses both wings. So one wing is like the Wisdom. One wing is like the Method, or compassion. The Buddha taught both Wisdom and Method, but in a slightly different way: one directly and one indirectly.

MANJUSHRI & MAITREYA - BUDDHA'S TRANSMISSION OF THE WISDOM & METHOD LINEAGES

Buddha had two disciples, one named **Manjushri** and one named **Maitreya**. Manjushri and Maitreya were very highly realized Bodhisattvas. According to the tantric system, they were already enlightened. But according to the sutric system -- this course material is presented according to the sutric system -- they were very highly realized Bodhisattvas. Even though they looked like ordinary human beings, they were actually emanations of celestial beings, if you like. It is said that they were beings from Pure Realms. They came down to earth from the Pure Realms and took on human form. Maitreya came down from the Tushita Pure Realm, and took on the form of an ordinary human being. “Ordinary” meaning a Bodhisattva human being. And Buddha gave the whole - even though he had taught the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* beforehand, he emphasized the Wisdom, all the teachings with respect to the **MIDDLE WAY** Wisdom, Emptiness, this whole body of teachings on those, Buddha gave to Manjushri. Because the Buddha had to pass on these teachings onto some special person who had the capacity to pass them on in the future. So the category of Wisdom teachings, Buddha passed on to Manjushri.

Then with respect to the Method teachings, compassion, the different practices, anything that is not necessarily part of the ‘mind realizing Emptiness,’ so compassion, Bodhicitta, the Practice of the different perfections, Mindfulnesses and so forth, these Buddha passed on to Maitreya. So he did not pass on both the Method and Wisdom to just one person.

So which of those two traditions, the Wisdom taught to Manjushri and the Method taught to Maitreya, which of those two are we concentrating on in this course? [Student's reply inaudible]. Maitreya. Why is that? [Student's reply inaudible]. Basically because it is the Method.

We are studying the Method of the *Universal Vehicle* in this course. So the Study of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, the studies of this course, the *OCL* studies - this is the study of the Method, the study of the different kinds of meditations, different paths and practices of the *Universal Vehicle*. We do speak about Emptiness, this will be a topic of this class.

However, the study of the **MIDDLE WAY** Wisdom in great detail is the subject of a later course [in the monastic curriculum]. Usually the Study of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* take five to seven years. When those studies of the Method (practices, path and so forth) are completed, then the monks and nuns intensively study Emptiness. They study what is Emptiness; what is the object of negation, how do you realize Emptiness, what are the stages for realizations, and so forth.

Why we need to Study *Universal Vehicle* METHOD Path before focusing on the WISDOM {Emptiness} Path Study

Now, what is it important to study the *Universal Vehicle* Method first, before we study Emptiness? [Student's reply inaudible]. So we don't go astray. How could we go astray? [Student's reply inaudible]. 'Not knowing the path.' Okay.

Actually, I'd like draw a chart now. This is not a traditional Tibetan teaching device, but charts and pictures have always helped me.

Chart - **FUNDAMENTAL & UNIVERSAL VEHICLES' PRACTICES of METHOD & WISDOM PATHS**

PATH	PRACTICES to Cultivate in the	FUNDAMENTAL VEHICLE	UNIVERSAL VEHICLE
METHOD	a. RENUNCIATION – 'mind of definite emergence'	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	b. GOAL ASPIRATION Self-Liberation: wish for oneself to be liberated from Cyclic Existence Bodhicitta: wish to achieve Buddhahood for benefit of all beings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
WISDOM	Mind Realizing Emptiness Directly	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Two Spiritual Goals of Buddhism: Self-Liberation & Enlightenment.

Of the two categories of teachings (Wisdom & Method) that we need to attain Self-Liberation and Enlightenment. First is the Method.

What is the Method in the *Fundamental Vehicle*?

What is the Entrance to the Path that leads to Self-Liberation? Any idea? [Student's reply inaudible]. Renunciation.

RENUNCIATION

What is Renunciation? Renunciation is a mind. “Renunciation” is a very loose translation of the Tibetan term, which is *nying jung gi sems pa*, ཉེང་ຈུང་གི་སེམས་པ, but is more accurately translated as ‘the mind of definite emergence.’ If you translate it literally, word by word: a mind [*sems pa*, ཟེམས་པ] of definite [*nyes*, ཉୟ] emergence [*jung*, ཁୁང]. I’ll try to give it as literally as possible; actually this is not completely literal but.

What does ‘*a mind of definite emergence*’ refer to? I mean just ‘renunciation’ - people misunderstand ‘renunciation’. They think ‘renunciation’ is if you throw away all your movies, all your money maybe, all your TV’s or whatever. So that is not ‘renunciation’ here in this context. ‘Renunciation’ means a ‘mind of definite emergence’ - want to emerge from something; wanting to definitely get out of something. What does that mean? Wanting to get out of what?³

STUDENT: Samsara.

VEN. WANGMO: Exactly. It’s a mind that, for one’s self, wants to become Liberated. The wish for oneself to be liberated from cyclic existence [Skt. *samsara*] So that is the method of the *Fundamental Vehicle*.

What is the Wisdom of the *Fundamental Vehicle*?

With respect to Wisdom, which mind is the most important that is the mind that can lead one to self-liberation?

STUDENT: Selflessness.

VEN. WANGMO: A mind that realizes Emptiness directly. A mind that realizes Emptiness directly. That is what is needed for self-liberation.

What is the Method in the *Universal Vehicle*?

So in order to attain the other goal, Enlightenment, we have the two categories of teaching: Wisdom and Method. What about the Method? Is the Method the same as that required to attain Self-Liberation? Is the mind [generation] that is Entrance to the Path to Enlightenment the same as that required to enter the *Fundamental Vehicle* path? [Student’s reply inaudible]. Exactly. We need more than that. We need [to generate] the *Mind of Enlightenment* [Skt. *Bodhicitta*].

That *Mind of Enlightenment* is actually not directed towards our own Liberation, but is directed towards the Liberation others. So basically, a mind that wants others to be Liberated associated with the understanding that I can only liberate others if I become fully enlightened myself. So the *Mind of Enlightenment* is not the *Mind of Definite Emergence*. The *Mind of Enlightenment* is a mind understanding that only by gaining Enlightenment can I liberate all sentient beings. So the wish for all sentient beings to be liberated from cyclic existence – Bodhicitta.

³ See Ven. Wy’s Q&A p. 20.

What is the Wisdom employed in the *Universal Vehicle*?

But what is the Wisdom employed to attain the *Universal Vehicle* goal of Enlightenment? [Student's reply inaudible] It is the same as Wisdom used to attain the *Fundamental Vehicle* goal of Self-Liberation; right. Wisdom realizing Emptiness.

So now, how can we determine which goal a Buddhist practitioner is pursuing? Is the goal determined by whether or not the practitioner has a mind that realizes Emptiness? No. So we see that someone can be practicing the [*MIDDLE WAY*] Wisdom-Tenets whether the goal is to become self-liberated or to attain Enlightenment. [Student's reply inaudible]. So we can ascertain practitioners' goals based on Method teachings they study and practice.

“Masculine” Method / “Feminine” Wisdom

Usually in the West, from whom do we get our family names: the mother or the father? [Student's reply inaudible]. The father. In the Tibetan tradition, how do you decide that someone is from Kham or Amdo if the father is from Kham and the mother is from Amdo? Where is the child from? [Student's reply inaudible]. Kham; right. So the male, the father, we get the family name from the father. In the Tibetan tradition, although some have family names, oftentimes children are named by lamas so the children do not necessarily have a family name. But which area of Tibet a child is from, or which village a Tibetan belongs to, is dependent upon the father if the mother and father are from different locales.

Therefore, Method is said to be male. Wisdom is said to be female. [Student's reply inaudible]. Yes. I'm afraid. There must be more positive reasons. When I first heard Wisdom was feminine, I thought, 'yeah, yeah.' There may be other reasons; I don't really know. In tantra there must be other reasons as well. But really one of the main reasons is, we say the kind of lineage or category someone belongs to depends on the father, the Method. This is decisive. So it is the male Method which determines where we are going, because the female Wisdom - both *minds*, the Wisdom will lead to either goal.

So getting back to my question: Why do we study the Method, the *Universal Vehicle* Method first? So Michael was right when he said, "So we don't go astray". In the sense that We studied and hopefully contemplated and meditated upon the Perfection of Wisdom's hidden meaning, which are the practices of Bodhicitta. We understood. We developed naturally a wish to go to Enlightenment, having studied, having seen the benefits. And not everyone, but a majority usually develop a wish to become fully enlightened. They see what is ahead of them. Have a rough idea of what to expect. And then, having the Wisdom reintroduced to them, during the study of the *MIDDLE WAY*, they don't go towards Self-Liberation. They already know where they are going. So that is one of the reasons why, in the monasteries and nunneries and even in your practice, the *Universal Vehicle* Method is studied first.

This is not to say that you necessarily have to have Bodhicitta before realizing Emptiness; right. That's not the case. Some people may realize Emptiness before Bodhicitta. So we are not talking about actually developing Bodhicitta. We are just looking at the Path, the practice, and trying to start in the beginning of the practice. Before Bodhicitta, there is a lot of work to be done. There are other practices, other minds, other meditations we have to do anyway. Is this clear so far?

Yes, please.

Q/A re Fundamental Vehicle / Self-Liberation

SAMANATHA: Something I've been looking at and I don't understand, with all due respect to the Hinayana path, a mind that realizes Emptiness directly, to me that's a very high realization. And to me, from what I've been reading, it means that one becomes aware of the unity of all. So then why does one not automatically tend towards Bodhicitta. If someone has a mind that has realized Emptiness directly, I don't get why that mind would not automatically switch to Bodhicitta and want to become Enlightenment for the sake of all beings.

VEN. WANGMO. I'm afraid - this is a very good question. But it takes a long time to answer. This is actually, this course basically explains this, this answer comes up. But if I answer it now, it will take a long time. So if you still want to get an answer soon, after class, I'm happy to talk to you about it; but right now unfortunately I'm not able to do it.

But let me just say that much. Self-liberation, that is pretty amazing. Even though you have the mind realizing Emptiness, which is also amazing. But Self-Liberation is even more amazing. So that already exceeding, Self-Liberation that state exceeding the mind realizing Emptiness, by just realizing Emptiness, you do not necessarily attain Self-Liberation. But there is more to that. Okay.

SAMANTHA: I'll wait, thank you.

VEN. WANGMO: What is also important is not to get confused about Hinayana practice, which is the *Fundamental Vehicle* practice - Hinayana translated into English is “*Fundamental Vehicle*”. We must do this Fundamental Vehicle practice in order to become fully enlightened. It is almost like you are walking up a hill, and half-way up is Self-Liberation and all the way to top is Enlightenment. Well, you cannot just jump. You still need to take the steps, which is ‘the practice that is common to the practitioner of the *Fundamental Vehicle*’. So your goal is different. It's a bit like you try to climb Mt. Everest but do not want to stay at one of the base camps. You still walk the same path, but you do not aim for one of the camps in between; you aim for the summit.

Practices of the Three Persons (*Lam Rim*)

So the practices still need to be done. That's why we talk about the “Three Persons”, the ‘Practices of the Three Persons’:

Practices of Persons of Beginning [Small/Low] Capacity.

These have nothing to do with *Fundamental Vehicle* or *Universal Vehicle*. These are practices done by someone who is concerned not just with happiness in this life but also in the next life.

H.H. the Dalai Lama spoke about the ‘practices common to persons of small capacity [on 05 March 2007] during the Losar teachings.

The ‘three persons’ does not refer to three different persons (having different mental continua). Rather the ‘three persons’ refers to one person who, starting as a beginner [“*person of small capacity*”], continues to practice step-by-step. Therefore, we are talking about *practices that are*

[done in] *common* with the *person of the small capacity*; [and this expression is] not talking about ‘small capacity persons’. For example, regarding the education of a child: the goal is for the child to study at university. But in preparation for that, the child first attends kindergarten, then elementary school and high school in order to become qualified for university admission.

Practices of Persons of Intermediate [Middling] Capacity.

These are the practices that are done by *Fundamental Vehicle* practitioners [and also by *Universal Vehicle* practitioners]. So they are practices [shared in] “common” [by the two Vehicles].

H.H. the Dalai Lama explains that it is very important to remember that [in the *Universal Vehicle*] we do the *Fundamental Vehicle* practices, so we should never, never look down upon the practice of the *Fundamental Vehicle*. Because many of us have not actually even entered the practice of the *Fundamental Vehicle*. I myself, you know, I haven’t gotten the kind of renunciation that qualifies you to be a *Fundamental Vehicle* practitioner. So it is really important to do those practices, but we do not say that we do only the *Fundamental Vehicle* in the sense that we aim for Self-Liberation. But we do practices in common with the practices of the *Fundamental Vehicle*. So that is an important point. That is the person of middling or intermediate capacity.

Practices of Persons of Advanced [Higher] Capacity.

When you are ready, you move on to the practices of someone of higher or advanced capacity in the sense of doing the practices of Bodhicitta, attaining that Mind of Enlightenment, and moving on from there.

The different Paths and so forth are the subjects of this course. Now, I’m giving a course overview and so forth. There will be more detail.

TRANSMISSION of the WISDOM [PROFOUND] LINEAGE of the *PERFECTION of WISDOM SUTRAS* to TIBET

So now for a little bit of history. This is done in the Tibetan system; and also perhaps in the Indian system before that. Why? Because we need to trace the way these *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* came down to us today. Understand how they actually were passed on. A lot of people in other traditions assert that the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* were not actually taught by the Buddha. Because after the Buddha’s passing away, they disappeared. And then they reappeared again. So of course, some people felt that the Buddha did not teach these sutras, because if he had done so they would have remained after he passed away; but they did not.

After Buddha’s Parinirvana

And so as I said last time, forty years after the Buddha passed away, the *Fundamental Vehicle* teachings that he taught to a wider audience, and especially in the third century B.C. [before Christ] King Ashoka spread the teachings to other countries. The *Fundamental Vehicle* teachings went to countries like Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma. But the *Universal Vehicle* teachings were only practiced by very few people in secret because other people, if they had heard about them, they would have developed wrong views. So they were practiced in secret and were not widely available. And I talked about this legend, that they were taken to a different realm to the Serpent Realm.

Basically, no one actually composed commentaries on the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. No one explained them again. A few hundred years had passed, and with the language changing - when we read works by Shakespeare they are somewhat difficult to understand. So the same happened with the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. Only a very few people understood them, and there were no commentaries, no explanations of them.

Nagarjuna

Now, then there was a person called Nagarjuna. He was born about 400 years, 450 years after the Buddha's passing away. Nagarjuna was a highly realized being, a Seventh Ground Bodhisattva, which means that he was on the Path of Meditation. He had reached the second highest Path. He only had three Grounds left to become fully Enlightenment. And we will talk about what these Grounds mean later. Anyway, he was pretty high up there. An incredible practitioner. Incredibly learned, skilled. He had visions of Manjushri.

So you remember, Buddha passed on the direct meaning, the Wisdom lineage [of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*] to Manjushri who is one of the Pure Realms. So Nagarjuna had visions of Manjushri and he started receiving teachings from Manjushri on the Wisdom, on what the Buddha had taught. And then Nagarjuna composed his own commentaries. He reintroduced, if you like, the direct meaning of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, the *Wisdom Lineage*. So Nagarjuna made the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* mainstream Buddhist material again. He explained their meaning. He composed different commentaries. Later on I will tell you exactly which commentaries he composed. He composed six very important commentaries. But I don't want to confuse you, so I'm not going to go into each one of them. There will be a separate topic on Nagarjuna a little later.

Nagarjuna composed these texts and reintroduced the Wisdom Lineage of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. Then Nagarjuna passed that Wisdom Lineage on to one of his disciples. Does anyone know the disciple he passed it on to?

STUDENT1: Aryadeva. STUDENT2: Chandrakirti.

VEN. WANGMO: Chandrakirti is right. Because it is true that Nagarjuna passed on teachings to Aryadeva. But the specific explanation, the *Explanatory Lineage of the Wisdom Lineage* was passed on to Chandrakirti^y.

Nagarjuna's Life-Span & Transmission of Wisdom Lineage to Chandrakirti

But now what I need to say is that Nagarjuna is said to have lived for 900 years. Now this is the legend again. He lived for a long time. Because Chandrakirti came much later, so how could Nagarjuna have passed it on to Chandrakirti if they never actually met. So the legend goes, he lived for some people say 600 years; some say 900 years; for a long time. So this whole history of the transmission in India is not very clear. It is not as clear as the Tibetan history because there are not as many records available. Some of the records that do exist differ so a lot of legend is interwoven.

Another story explains that there were different Nagarjuna. Not just a single person who lived for 900 years. Different people are all called Nagarjuna. The first Nagarjuna reintroduced the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. The next one did something else, and I'll talk about that later. And there were different stages. And then when Chandrakirti was born, he passed on the Wisdom Lineage.

Nagarjuna also had a student, Aryadeva, to whom he gave teachings on the Wisdom. But the full body of the explanatory part of the Wisdom Lineage was passed on to Chandrakirti.

So the Wisdom Lineage goes from Nagarjuna to Chandrakirti.

Transmission of Wisdom Lineage from Chandrakirti on in India to Atisha

Who is the third person? **Vidyakokila the Elder**. So he came after Chandrakirti. Again, the whole body of the Wisdom Lineage was passed onto him.

And the next person was **Vidyakokila the Younger**. Not that difficult. Vidyakokila the Younger was the teacher of a very famous person who went to Tibet. **Atisha**. So Vidyakokila the Younger was the teacher of Dipamkara Atisha, a great Indian scholar who took the Wisdom Lineage to Tibet. So this is how we get the direct meaning of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, even though we are not studying this. But still to understand how the Method aspect of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* got to Tibet. Now we have the Method Lineage still. Yes.

Q&A - 'Lineages'

MICHAEL: One question. When you look at the Refuge tree you have Buddhapalita and the others. What is the difference, because she mentioned that.⁴

VEN. WANGMO: Yes, there are so many ways of explaining different lineages; right. So this is just the Wisdom body of the Perfection of Wisdom, the direct meaning, that was passed on. But of course, there were other commentators that did not receive the full body but they received some teachings and they composed commentaries. So the Seventeen Nalanda Scholars - Buddhapalita, Bhavaviveka, they are included in that. There are just so many different ways of looking at certain lineages that they carried on. Here they are strictly speaking of **MIDDLE WAY Consequentialist [Prasangika]** scholars. Whereas, some of the **Seventeen Nalanda Scholars** that you talked about in the Refuge tree, some of those are Autonomists, not Consequentialists (such as Bhavaviveka and so forth). But I try to keep it simple, though it is really complicated. For now, all you need to know is the Wisdom Lineage and the Method Lineage. We've derived the Wisdom Lineage in Tibet with Atisha.

TRANSMISSION of the METHOD LINEAGE⁵ of the PERFECTION of WISDOM SUTRAS to TIBET

Indian Holders of the Method Lineage.

The Method Lineage starts off with **Maitreya**. And from there? **Asanga**. And I will talk about Asanga's life a little bit and about Maitreya. But just to get the names of the Method Lineage. It's Maitreya, Asanga and then. Who composed the *Abhidharma-kosha*? **Vasubhandu**. Even though Vasubhandu was not a follower of the Consequentialist school, it doesn't matter because we are dealing with the *Universal Vehicle* method. And Vasubhandu, first he was a follower of the **GREAT EXPOSITION** school, but then he became a **MIND ONLY** follower. So, Maitreya passed the lineage on

⁴ See further Michael's Q&A p. 21.

⁵ The Method Lineage is often called the Vast Lineage or the Extensive [Tib. རྒྱତྚྰ୍କ୍ଷଣ୍ୱ୍ଞା].

to Asanga. Asanga passed it on to his brother, Vasubhandu. Then? **Arya Vimuktasena.**

Then **Vimuktasenagaumin**. Sometimes people leave away the ‘gaumin’ and say, Ven. Vimutasena. So his name is translated variously as: Vimuktasenagaumin, or Ven. Vimuktasena-gaumin, or Ven. Vimuktasena.⁶

Now is it getting more difficult. Who is the next? [Student’s reply inaudible]. **Haribhadra.** Yeah, most people go to Haribhadra, but there are some people in between. **Paramasena.** And then **Vimutasena**. So these are all names that we do not really know; and it is does not really matter. There is not much in the history about them. They are not so illustrious or famous as the others. I’ll talk more about Asanga, Vasubhandu, Arya Vimuktisena. But the others, there’s not really much written about them available. And then it’s **Vairochana**. And then it is **Haribhadra**.

STUDENT: Not Santideva?

VEN. WANGMO: No, not Santideva.

MICHAEL: They are all in the prayer book.

VEN. WANGMO: Yes, they are in this lineage prayer. Before the teachings of H.H. the Dalai Lama, for example, there is the **Lam Rim Lineage Prayer**. In this prayer, usually these names appear in verses to the Wisdom Lineage, and then the verses of prayer to the holders of the Method Lineage.

So after Haribhadra is **Kusali, Ratnasena**. Do you know who the next holder of the lineage is, Atisha’s most famous teacher? **Survanadvipa** or **Serlingpa**. I’ll just write it up here. That’s is the Tibetan name, but a lot of people use his Tibetan name, Serlingpa.

Atisha brought the two lineages to Tibet, because the last in this line of Method: Haribhadra, Kusali, Ratnasena and then the last one, Survanadvipa, he was one of the teachers of Atisha and he taught the entire method body to Atisha, who then brought it to Tibet. So this is how the Tibetans explains why they have the complete *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, the direct meaning and the indirect meaning were combined in Atisha.

ANI NORDRON: The Method teachings must have come to the Old School, the Nyingma?

VEN. WANGMO: Yes. Now this is only how the **Explanatory Lineages** came to Tibet. And people get a little confused about what follows now. Because the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*, they came to Tibet early on.

EARLY TRANSMISSIONS OF BUDDHISM TO TIBET

Now I would like to talk a little bit about how Buddhism came to Tibet. I’m not going to go into a lot of detail. You’ve heard of Guru Rinpoche, Shantarakshita. Tibet’s history, the civilization in Tibet, the legend of how Tibet started, does anyone know the legend?

⁶ see Ven. Dorji’s Q&A p. 21.

Tibetan Origination Story

Where do the Tibetans come from. Yeah, the union of an ape and an ogress. An ape and an ogress, the male ape and female ogress. And ogress is a cruel, frightening giant that eats people. Actually, the ape is said to be an emanation of Chenrezig and the ogress is said to be an emanation of Tara [who gave birth to the first six Tibetans in the Yarlung valley]. So that is where the Tibetans trace their ancestry.

First Tibetan King

The famous scholar-saint, Buton Rinpoche composed a text on Tibetan history. He offered a version of the **story of the first Tibetan King**. He said that around the 4th century B.C., in India there was a King who had a son who had overhanging eye lids and webbed fingers. The King, being fearful of these features of his son, his baby boy in a little box and sent him away on the Ganges River. And some peasant found the boy and raised him. Later, when the boy found out what had happened, he escaped over the Himalayas to Tibet.

And the story goes that twelve Bon priests - you know the religion that was dominant in Tibet [before Buddhism] was the Bon tradition. The Bon-pas are said to have come from Persia. People say different things, different countries. But most commonly, the Bon tradition is said to have come to Tibet from Persia.

Twelve Bon-pa priests found that son of the Indian king, the prince with overhanging eyelids and webbed fingers. And they asked him, 'Where are you from.' And Indians, to indicate that they do not understand a question, gesture upwards with their hands. So the Bon priests thought he was saying that he came from the sky, so they thought that he was a god. So they made him the King of Tibet, and his name was Nyatri Tsen-po ["Neck-enthroned"].

Another version of this story about Nyatri Tsen-po says that he did not have overhanging eyelids and webbed fingers. He was just a prince or king who fled India from a war and he was a descendant of the heroes of the *Mahabharata*. From there, the story is the same. He fled over the Himalayans, and then met the Bon priests who thought he was a god. So he was the first Tibetan King, an Indian of royal descent - either an abandoned prince or an actual king.

First Introduction of Buddhism in Tibet

Then Buddhism came to Tibet for the first time in the 4th century A.D. during the reign of King Lha Thothori Nyantsen (said to be the 28th King after King Nyatri Tsen-po). [Some texts say that King Lha Thothori Nyantsen was born ca. 173 A.D.].

According to legend one day Buddhist text and relics consecrated to Chenrezig fell down from sky onto the roof of the palace. Historians say that the text and relics were actually brought from India to Tibet. The heavenly-origin legend was propagated because the Bon religion was so [politically] powerful, that even the king was afraid to take responsibility for introducing Buddhist scripture into Tibet. The king took great care to preserve the Sanskrit text for future generations, because he king had a dream five generations in the future, Tibetans would be able to understand that text. This is the first historical account of a Buddhist text being brought to Tibet perhaps by a merchant. But no one understood the text but because of the King's dream, the text was preserved.

TIBET'S FIRST DHARMA KING - SONGTSEN GAMPO (CA. 618-650).

In the 7th century A.D., the 33rd king, Songtsen Gampo, was the first of the **Three Dharma Kings of Tibet**. The Three Dharma King were responsible for the spread of the dharma in Tibet. King Thothori Nyantsen was not really responsible for spreading the dharma; all he did was preserve the text. But Songtsen Gampo was the first king to really make an effort to propagate Buddhism in Tibet.

King Songtsen Gampo's Conversion by his Nepali & Chinese Wives

How was he converted to Buddhism? To foster peace between the Tibetan kingdom and its neighbors, Songtsen Gampo married five princesses. Most famously, he married Buddhist princesses from Nepal and China.

First, the King married the Nepali princess Bhikuti. Princess Bhikuti came to Tibet with a statue of Akshobya Buddha which was housed in the Ramoche temple located in the center of a lake. About four years later [ca. 641 A.D.], Songtsen Gampo married the Chinese Princess Wen-chen. She brought with her a statue of Shakyamuni Buddha which is the most famous image of Buddha in Tibet – the *Jo-wo Rinpoche* installed in Lhasa's Jo-khang temple.

So these two wives had a very great influence on the King. When he married them he was not a Buddhist. Apparently he had the rough manners of Tibetans at that time, and he was a warrior king. So his wives were aghast by his behavior, so they taught him manners and Buddhism. King Songtsen Gampo is said to be an incarnation of Chenrezig. But still, the way he manifested was as a rough barbarian. These two princesses converted him to Buddhism.

King Songtsen Gampo's Work

Until that point, the capitol of Tibet was in the Yarlung Valley. Songtsen Gampo moved the capitol to Lhasa, and on its hill, he built the red palace which was expanded into the Potala palace by the 5th Dalai Lama Kelsang Gyatso.

King Songtsen Gampo realized that in order to study Buddhism, Tibetan needed to develop the tools necessary for a sophisticated literary language. Some accounts maintain that some form of Tibetan script existed but it too primitive to handle the task of translating all of the Buddhist Sanskrit texts into Tibetan.

The king sent **Tomni Sambhota** (along with 16 assistants) to study in India in order to devise a standard Tibetan script and grammar. Some accounts say they went to Nalanda, others say Kashmir. Kashmir was a great center of Buddhist learning at that time; the Islamic invasions had not conquered Kashmir and Buddhism was thriving in Kashmir. Tomni Sambhota devised a phonetic script by simplifying the Gupta version of Sanskrit script and adapting it to oral Tibetan.

The King also invited some scholars -- **Acharya Kumara** and **Brahmin Shankara** from India and **Acharya Shilmanju** from Nepal -- but they have not become famous figures in Tibetan Buddhism. The great Tibetan lotsawa (translator) Tomni Sambhota having developed the necessary script and grammar, the text on Chenrezig received by King Lha Thothori Nyantsen was translated. Then, based on that scripture, King Songtsen Gampo, himself, gave the first Buddhist teaching in Tibet.

But still the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* at this point have still not be transmitted to Tibet.

TIBET'S SECOND DHARMA KING - TRISONG DETSEN (CA. 740-798)

The Second Dharma King in the 8th century was called Trisong Detsen. This is where the Nyingma tradition starts. The Second Dharma King is said to be an incarnation of Manjushri.

Shantaraskhita's work in Tibet - Nyingma tradition Genesis

King Trisong Detsen invited **Shantarakshita** to Tibet to start a community of monks and nuns. Shantarakshita was an incredible Nalanda scholar, who served as abbot of Vikramashila monastery, one of the greatest seats of Buddhist learning in India.

When Shantarakshita came to Tibet he faced stiff opposition by Bon priests. The animistic Bon religion of that era, intimately involved with propitiating the spirits of nature forces, invoked local spirits against Shantarakshita. When natural calamities, e.g., flooding, earthquakes, occurred, the Bon priests blamed Shantarakshita, telling the people that his wicked efforts to establish Buddhism in Tibet made the local spirits angry.

Before leaving Tibet, Shantarakshita advised King Trisong Detsen that the powerful Buddhist tantric yogi, Guru Rinpoche, Padmasambhava, could subdue Bon spirits and priests.

Padmasambhava, Guru Rinpoche & Yeshe Tsogyal

So in the middle of 8th century, King Trisong Detsen invited Guru Rinpoche to Tibet. Guru Rinpoche was not a monk. Padmasambhava means 'lotus born'. So the story goes that when he was eight years old, he was found, sitting on a lotus, by an Indian king. So he was said to have been born from a lotus. He was raised by the king and then became an incredible practitioner. He had many consorts.

STUDENT: He was going out with Shantarakshita's sister.

VEN. WANGMO: Was he? There are a lot of stories. Like the famous Kangra valley place, Tso Pema. But I don't want to go into the life story of Guru Rinpoche because there are so many books in which his stories are told.

Anyway, he was invited to Tibet, and he was able to subdue all these forces that caused so many obstacles to the spread of Buddhism in Tibet. And King Trisong Detsen gave his most beautiful wife, **Yeshe Tsogyal**, to Guru Rinpoche. Yeshe Tsogyal was an incredible woman and she became the tantric consort of Guru Rinpoche and is said to have attained Enlightenment (or at least a very very high state of realization).

So Guru Rinpoche and Yeshe Tsogyal traveled all around Tibet and they subdued spirits and made the place suitable for the Buddha's teachings.

Then Shantarakshita came back and together with Guru Rinpoche and the King, they built the first monastery called Sam-ye Ling where the first monks were ordained in Tibet. About 108 Tibetan scholars went to India and brought back the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*.

King Trisong Detsen composed the first Tibetan Buddhist commentary

The first Tibetan ever to compose a Buddhist commentary was King Trisong Detsen. His commentary, **Defending the Venerable Mother**, was on the *Perfection of Wisdom*

Hundred-Thousand [Stanzas] Sutra. This is the most extensive *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* of the whole genre that has been translated into Tibetan, the one of *One Hundred Thousand Verses*; and King Trisong Detsen composed a commentary on it in the 8th century.

So this is when Buddhism really begins to flourish in Tibet and the Nyingma tradition is begun. Trisong Detsen was the *Second Dharma King*, because he is one of the Kings who did so much work to establish and propagate Buddhism.

TIBET'S THIRD DHARMA KING - TRI RALPA CHEN.

The Third - and final -- Dharama King was Tri Ralpa Chen. He issued a decree that every monk should be supported by seven households. So he introduced the tradition of the lay community supporting the monks and nuns so that he did not have to go out and work and could focus on their studies and meditation, and so forth.

MICHAEL: Did you say 'seven families'?

VEN. WANGMO: Seven households. Households, perhaps three generations lived in one household.

TRANSLATING THE INDIAN TEXTS INTO TIBETAN

So thousands of temples and monasteries were constructed. Many of the first translations of Indian texts were revised. So this is really important. How they actually went about translating the teachings.

Today, anyone can translate anything and publish anything. Then you get all these different translations for the same original terms: some are correct and most of them are not. It's really a problem. I should not say 'most of them' are incorrect, but there are a lot of mistakes. And it is so difficult for translators to agree on terminology. For instance, call '*delusions*' '*delusions*' - and not '*cankers*' and '*fetters*' and '*negative*' and whatever; there are so many different translations for '*delusions*'. Whereas in Tibetan, one word *nyon mongs*.⁷ They took the Sanskrit word – it was easy to standardize the translation because it was a project of the royal government. The Kings said, 'Okay, it's going to be *nyon mongs* and nothing else.' It is much easier in that way. But never mind. There's good and bad to everything.

So the translations were revised again and again. King Tri Ralpa Chen invited Indian masters Acharyas Jinamitra, Surendrabodhi, Danashila to work with a team of Tibetans headed by Yeshe-de to review and revise the earlier translations for accuracy and develop a very accurate translation standard.

Actually for English translation, something similar is beginning. To translate the *Great Treatise of the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* by Lama Tsong Khapa, a group of 14 scholars [*The Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee*] was worked together, everyone checking everyone's work. So now in the West this is happening—not just relying on one individual to translate important texts.

⁷ delusions – *nyon mongs* – རྒྱନ་ସྚନ୍ଦ୍ର.

DARK ERA FOR BUDDHISM IN TIBET - KING LANG DARMA

Then there was a dark time in Tibet. You may have heard about King Lang Darma. There are so many stories about Lang Dharma. The Tibetans say he was such an evil person, he had a black tongue and horns growing out of his head. He was so evil. He was opposed to Buddhism. He emptied all the monasteries, made monks disrobe and join the army. He just did everything in his power to have Buddhism disappear from Tibet.

Tibetan Tradition - Sticking Tongue out in Greeting

Because he was so evil, there's a tradition and still today, in Tibet, when you greet someone you do this [you stick your tongue out and rub your head]. Here in Dharamsala, you will see Tibetan sticking their tongues out and sometimes rubbing their heads. It means, 'I have no horns, and no black tongue. I'm not a devil like Lang Dharma.' To show you don't have a black tongue and you don't have horns, so you are not some kind of evil person. That's one way of explaining this. I don't know whether there are other reasons for doing that. But if someone does stick their tongue out at you, do not be offended. That person is just say, 'Hi, I'm not Lang Darma. Nice to meet you.'

King Lang Darma's Assassination by Palkyi Dorje & the Black Hat Dance

There are some nice stories explaining how they got rid of King Lang Darma. **Palkyi Dorje**, a Buddhist monk and incredible practitioner, our of bodhicitta, he planned to kill the King. Not for his own benefit; not out of anger. He just wanted to stop Lang Dharma, who was accumulated negative karma and at the same time help Buddhism continue to flourish in Tibet. He put on black clothes - everything was black. He painted his horse black with coal. And with a black cloak and black hat and black horse, he rode to the palace of King Lang Darma. He did this dance in front of the palace. You still see this dance, the *Black Hat Dance*, traditionally done in many monasteries to remember that time. So he was doing that dance. And one of the King's ministers called him into the palace to perform the dance before King Lang Darma. And so while he was dancing, he took about a bow and arrow, shot the king and killed him. Then he rode off to a river and washed the coal dust off his horse. His cloak and clothes were lined with white material, so he changed his clothes. So now his horse was white and his clothes were white. So when the king's soldiers came looking for a black horse with a black rider, they found a man in white on a white horse. So he escaped. Went back to his cave and continued his meditations.

Chinese Vinaya Tradition Saved the Tibetan Bhikshu/Gelong Lineage

King Lang Dharma had succeeded in eradicating all of the monks except for two. Only two fully ordained monks [Skt. Bhikshu; Tib. Gelong] were left in Tibet. So possibly, there were still some novices, but there were only two bhikshus, gelongs, fully-ordained. In order to restore that lineage, which can be traced all the way back to the Buddha, they invited two Chinese monks to reestablish the Tibetan lineage. Those Chinese monks wore blue, and in order to remember the kindness of these Chinese monks, Tibetan monks and nuns have blue stitching and blue trim on the sleeves of their vests (donka).

Modern Implications for a Tibetan Bhikshuni/Gelong-ma Lineage

Today there is a lot of debate about the full ordination of nuns. The restoration of the Tibetan gelong lineage is often cited by those who support instituting a Tibetan lineage of fully ordained nuns [Skt. Bhikshuni; Tib. Gelong-ma] (through reliance on Bhikshunis from another tradition). However, an important difference is that there were two gelongs left. At the minimum, you need four fully ordained monks to ordain one gelong. So if you have none, right, what are you going to do. If you have two, you get two others from a different traditions and continue the tradition. That was okay.

There's a lot of debate now in Tibetan society because there are no fully ordained nuns, and only novice nuns. The reason is that in order to have at least one fully ordained, at least four fully ordained nuns are needed to give the ordination. Which is not the case for novices. Which I am for example. I don't have full ordination. I'm only a novice. A monk can give novice ordination.

There's no Tibetan bhikshun, *i.e.*, gelongma, fully ordained nuns tradition, because four bhikshunis (at one time at least) were never able to travel to Tibet because the journey was so harsh at that time. There were so many robbers on the way. People were raped and killed and so forth. Four women, four fully ordained nuns never made it at any one point in time.

Now, there's talk of reviving that tradition. And people cite this example from the time of Lang Darma. But that is a different situation because we do not have any fully ordained Tibetan nuns, and you had at least two fully ordained monks then. Some people argue that way. Whatever. I mean, there's a controversy about it and hopefully it is resolved soon. Just to bring this up for those who are aware of this current issue.

FURTHER SPREAD AND DEGENERATION OF BUDDHISM IN TIBET

So once they got rid of Lang Dharma, then the teachings continued spreading. For instance, Indian scholar-saints such as continued to travel to Tibet [e.g., great Kashmiri scholar **Shakayshri**; **Sadhpula** and others went to upper Ngari (West Tibet) and]. But as happens generally with phenomena, even the teachings, first the pure teachings arrived in Tibet but then they degenerated.

Those people who studied the sutric path teachings, the sutra tradition, the Sutrayana if you like, who concentrated on practicing Vinaya, they did not want to have anything to do with tantra. And those who practiced the Tantra Vehicle disregarding the teachings and practice of the Sutra Vehicle. The two paths were practiced separately. This conflict was aggravated by Indian pandits who were lured to Tibet by the prospect of gold offerings. They deceived the Tibetans with by teaching evil mantras and "tantric sex". So a lot of Tibetans claimed to be practicing tantra but they were just promoting ordinary sexual activity and denigrating the practice of Vinaya celibacy. People did not do pure practices, and there was a lot of degeneration.

**TRANSMISSION OF BOTH EXPLANATORY LINEAGES OF
THE *PERFECTION OF WISDOM SUTRAS* IN TIBET, FROM
JOWO ATISHA TO JE TSONG KHAPA**

KING Lha Lama Yeshe Oe [10TH CENTURY A.D.] & ATISHA

So at that time there was a king called Lha Lama Yeshe Oe. He was aghast by what had happened. He was shocked and he really wanted to promulgate the pure Buddhist teaching in Tibet. The story goes that first he dispatched 12 intelligent young Tibetans to Kashmir to bring back texts and teachings. Only two survived. Travel between Tibet and India was so difficult at that time, most people died. The Tibetans could not bear the heat; they were killed on the way, they got sick.

Great Translators Missions to India

The survivors were the great translator **Rinchen Zangpo** (958-1055) and **Legden Sherab**. They did bring back important texts that were translated into Tibetan by Rinchen Zangpo [many of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*] and his contemporary, **Khache Panchen**, translated Haribadhra's *Great Commentary on the Eight-Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*.

Even more significantly, upon their return to Tibet Rinchen Zangpo and Legden Sherab told King Lha Lama Yeshe Oe and about the great **Pandit Dipamkara Atisha** and they urged the King to invite Jowo Atisha to Tibet. The only way to stop the degeneration of Buddhism in Tibet is to bring Atisha. Merely upon hearing Atisha's name, the king developed great faith in him. So he sent nine Tibetans, including a Gyatsen Senge to India to invite Jowo Atisha to Tibet. However, they were unable to do so.

The Indians did not want to let Atisha leave because by the 10th Century A.D. Buddhism in India had suffered many attacks and was declining and degenerating. Military invasions of India resulted in the destruction of Buddhist institutions and produced social upheaval. They did not want to let go of the great scholar-saint Atisha, especially since he held the Explanatory lineages for both the Method and Wisdom of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*.

King Lha Lama Yeshe Oe's Sacrifice & Atisha's Decision

So the Tibetans came back empty-handed. Then the Khan of Garlog [a Mongolian warlord] heard that King Lha Lama Yeshe Oe was acting to revive Buddhism in Tibet. So the Khan of Garlog captured the king and held him hostage, demanding a gold ransom. So the King's paternal nephew Jangchub Oe collected some gold and went to free his uncle. But the Khan demanded more gold for ransom, the weight of the King's body in gold. The weight of gold that Jangchub Oe brought did not even equal the weight of the King's head. King Lha Lama Yeshe Oe told his nephew not to worry about his fate, "I'm ready to die. Let me die in this prison. Take the gold you have collected to India and get Atisha. Tell him that I sacrificed myself for the teachings, and bring Atisha to Tibet."

Jangchub obeyed King Lha Lama Yeshe Oe and sent the translator Nag-tso to India. Jowo Atisha was very impressed that a Tibetan king had willingly sacrificed his life for the sake of reviving the doctrine. Then Atisha had a vision of Tara who advised him to go to Tibet. According to his vision of Tara, even though Atisha's own life-span would be shortened, the beneficial effects from Atisha going to Tibet and propagating pure

doctrine would be immense as Buddhism was declining in India but would continue to flourish in Tibet if Atisha taught there.

ATISHA'S TRANSMISSION OF THE TWO EXPLANATORY LINEAGES OF THE PERFECTION OF WISDOM, METHOD & WISDOM, TO DROMTOMPA

For seventeen years, Jowo Atisha taught in Tibet. His great innovation for teaching Buddhism to Tibetans is known as the Lam Rim, the Graduated Stages of the Path to Enlightenment. He introduced a way of teaching that was never introduced in India, a presentation that was very suitable for the Tibetans.⁸ He understood the Tibetan way of thinking, so he introduced this kind of teaching. He transmitted the two Explanatory Lineages of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, Method and Wisdom, to his closest disciple, Dromtompa.

Dromtompa passed on three lineages, the Three Kadampa Lineages. Some of you may have heard of them, the classical Kampa lineage: the Lam Rim, the Oral Instruction – never mind.⁹ The combination of the Method and Eisdom lineages – they were contained in the Kadampa Lineages and passed on to Lama Tsong Khapa, the founder of the Geluk school.

Of course, besides the Kadampa Lineages, there were others in Tibet, the scholars of the Kagyu and Sakya. So all of the schools have the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*, but since we are here studying from the Gelukpa tradition, this is the lineage we concentrate on.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Appreciating the Sacrifices & Remembering the Kindness

Hopefully you have not been bored by this presentation. For myself, we here this history in bits and pieces but it is helpful to get an overview of the transmission to Tibet. You will hear more details later on. Tibetan Buddhism is so intertwined with their tradition, culture and such historical accounts are a big part of that.

Also, understanding that people made incredible efforts to get the pure teachings of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* is important. They sacrificed their lives. They went through so many hardships. Imagine traveling between Tibet and India. Now it is a bus; but what was it then. Today, food from India is important into Tibet so the Tibetans may become a bit used to that a little bit.

Apparently thousands of people died over the course of centuries of transmission of Buddhism from India to Tibet. They made these efforts in order to get pure teachings. They didn't just want to get some half-baked teachings. They wanted the pure teachings. Also, to understand how kind these ancient people were to us. For us, it is so easy now. You just need to get to the next bookstore or buy a CD. So easy. The hardships they went through are amazing. So we review the history to remember their kindness and to appreciate what they have done for us.

⁸ see Todd's Q&A below, p. 22.

⁹ see Amy's Q&A below, p 22,

Class Homework

Something else before we have question, one more point. Yesterday, Gilah came to see me and recommended that ‘Homework would be nice’ - not compulsory. So for those of you want to do it, okay. The thing is I cannot really grade homework; I have so much going on right now. But maybe if you do decide to write down your answers, I will be able to review them later. Or if you have questions, you can always come after class and ask me; we can spend some time together. But for today, there is no specific question. But I would like to ask you questions - sometimes based on one of the debates, one of the different issues a monastic teacher gives students to debate in this course. If you do not have someone else to debate with, do it with yourself. You just analyze it, meditate on it. Sometimes the questions are more of a review. Sometimes just a difficult question. If you like you can write down your response. If you don’t just think about it. Sometimes, I may ask you in the next class what is your opinion on that. Sometimes the question is just for your own practice.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

VEN. WY: When you say a ‘*mind of renunciation*’ - is that a ‘main main’?

Like Bodhicitta is a *main mind*? A realization is a *main mind*.

GEN WANGMO: Well there is a whole explanation on what is a *main mind* as distinguished from a *mental factor*. We go into that later. We are going to talk about renunciation. We are going to talk about bodhicitta – that is a whole subject, just bodhicitta. We talk about compassion.

VEN. WY: Bodhicitta is a *main mind*?

GEN WANGMO: That’s right. Bodhicitta is a *main mind*. Compassion is said to be a *mental factor*.

VEN. WY: Renunciation is a *main mind*?

GEN WANGMO: It is neither. Renunciation can be a *main mind*; it can be a *mental factor*.

VEN. WY: It can be both.

GEN WANGMO: It can be both; exactly. A mind that realizes Emptiness can be both. This is just for those of you who may have not heard of this. We talk about a consciousness, right, a *main mind*, and with that *main mind*, you have (what are called) *mental factors*. They come together with that *main mind*. So you have a *main mind* that looks at this room, and you have a *mental factor* of feeling; right. A feel of happiness, unhappiness or a neutral feeling. I see a person and there’s a feeling of happiness that comes along with that. Or a feeling of unhappiness if I don’t like that person and so forth.

So the *main mind* is just the mind that perceives the object, and the *mental factors* are different functions that come along with that *main mind*. So the *main mind* is just the perceiver, and the functions are feeling or concentration or discrimination (discriminating between the different parts of the object). So our minds, each single mind is very complex, and this is one way of explaining that complexity.

VEN. WY: So a mind realizing Emptiness post-meditation is a *mental factor*?

GEN WANGMO: It can be both. So, if you have a mind that realizes Emptiness, the *main mind* realizes Emptiness; the feeling realizes Emptiness - they all realize the same object. But the feeling, there's still a feeling coming along with that. There is still the concentration - they all work together. They're all part and parcel of one entity if you like. They are not actually separate. This is just a way of looking or explaining. A mind is not round or bulky [even though when discussing a mind, I may make gestures that seem to describe a physical object]. A mind is non-physical. So comes along a *main mind* which has the ability to perceive things, and along with it come different functions. Talking about this is a subject of Awareness and Knowledge. For those of you who have studied this, great. For those of you who have not, I think this explanation is almost sufficient. Although it will come up again and again - *main minds, mental factors* are talked about.

Any more questions? If some people ask questions that seem difficult for you, don't be discouraged. It doesn't matter, because people in the class have different backgrounds of study. If you want to know more about it, you can ask now or you can come after class and find out more.

VEN. DORJI: Arya Vimuktasena and Vimuktasenagaumin -- are they the same?

GEN WANGMO: No, different. Arya Vimuktasena and Vimuktasenagaumin were student and disciple. Arya Vimuktasena was the teacher of Vimuktasenagaumin. So maybe he just took the same name, just like a lot of students of H.H. the Dalai Lama are also called "Tenzin". I don't know whether that is the reason.

Any more questions? No? Is that a good sign or a bad sign? Yeah.

TODD: Would you say that Atisha actually invented the Lam Rim tradition?

Or is there any kind of preceding text that Atisha looked to? Given that you said that the Lam Rim tradition was not taught in India.

GEN WANGMO: Well, I need to clarify that. Atisha did not invent the Lam Rim, because Lam Rim means the Graduated Stages of the Path to Enlightenment. The Buddha taught that. But the sequence, the sequence in which he presented it, that was specifically for the Tibetans. In the Lam Rim, usually the first topic is Guru Devotion. The second is the Precious Human Rebirth. The third is Death and Impermanence. So this sequence was not necessarily taught in India exactly that way; maybe to some people but it was not a mainstream teaching. For the Tibetans, Atisha got to know the Tibetans, lived with them for some time and realized that for them, this approach is really appropriate.

Now what about Westerners? I don't know about the Guru Devotion first. There's been some talk of maybe putting that a little bit later because people maybe go too fast to rely on a teacher who is actually not qualified or people find that teaching off-putting. You know, 'Rely on the teacher? Rely on the Buddha not on some kind of' - you know. So there are different reasons why for Westerners that will not be the first subject [and H.H. the Dalai Lama in teachings here in Dharamsala has said that teaching Westerners about Guru Devotion at the outset of Lam Rim teachings is not appropriate].

MICHAEL: We ended, when going through the Method Lineage, with Vidyakokila . . .

GEN WANGMO: Vidyakokila the Younger. He was the teacher of Atisha.

MICHAEL: He was the teacher. So **Serlingpa** and **Vidyakokila** –

GEN WANGMO: Atisha had two teachers - different places. Because in India, these two traditions were passed on separately. So he received both lineages, and then was able to pass on both. This is one of the characteristics of a lineage - it should be 'unbroken.' Because the lineage does not just transmit the 'words'; the lineage also transmits realizations.

Lineage holders are not just ordinary people. They are people who have understood these teachings, have realized them and then passed them on. So there's an incredible blessing being transmitted. So the lineage should be unbroken for us to get the degree of realizations that we want.

MICHAEL: H.H. the Dalai Lama sometimes says that he is 'reviving' or 'restoring' a lineage. What does that mean in terms of keeping a lineage unbroken.

GEN WANGMO: I don't know exactly. I assume that sometimes the lineage holder is just one person. That's really dangerous. Possibly what H.H. the Dalai Lama is saying is that the sole holder should give the lineage transmission to a lot of people. So that if one person is unable to pass it on, there's still a lot of other holders left. So making it more mainstream. I guess that's what he meant. But I am not exactly certain; I would need to know the context. There must be some thread left – right? – even if it is tiny thread.

AMY: When Atisha brought the three lineages together –

I think I missed something, and I just want to clarify.

GEN WANGMO: The two lineages.

AMY: The two lineages together. And then you said something about three lineages. What was that?

VEN. NORDRON: The Kadampa lineages.

GEN WANGMO: Oh, I didn't go into that because I thought people would get too tired. I will talk about it next time. It's too much information right now. Until Atisha it is clear; the Kadampa I'll finish next time.

AMY: Because he brought the two lineages together, that was bringing to Tibet the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*.

GEN WANGMO: Yes, the complete Perfection of Wisdom - that which is directly shown and that which is indirectly, implicitly shown - so the Method and the Wisdom that the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* show, that complete lineage Atisha brought to Tibet.

47:24

I can also answer questions if you want to come after class.

DEDICATION PRAYERS